

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 11313 191102Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EUR-12 IO-13 ACDA-07 OES-07 /098 W

-----021581 191210Z /50

R 190836Z SEP 77

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6764

INFO CINCPAC

USLO PEKING

/AMEMBASSY TAIPEI 961

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PROP, CH, JA, TW, UR, US

SUBJECT: LOCAL PRC-CONTROLLED PRESS ON TENG'S RECENT COMMENTS

SUMMARY: NUMEROUS COMMENTARIES IN THE LOCAL PRC-CONTROLLED PRESS DURING THE PAST WEEK HAVE ELABORATED ON TENG'S COMMENTS TO VARIOUS FOREIGN VISITORS, EMPHASIZING THESE POINTS: THAT CHINA IS OBLIGED TO CORRECT FALSE IMPRESSIONS OF FLEXIBILITY OVER TAIWAN; THAT IT WILL NOT BE THE PAWN IN SOVIET-U.S. POWER PLAYS; THAT IT IS CAPABLE OF DEFENDING ITSELF; HOWEVER, CHINA HOPES SINO-U.S. TALKS ON NORMALIZATION WILL CONTINUE. END SUMMARY.

1. TENG HSIAO-PING'S RECENT REMARKS TO THE AP DELEGATION, THE JAPANESE PARLAMENTARIANS, AND MEMBERS OF THE JAPANESE NEW LIBERAL CLUB HAVE BEEN FULLY COVERED IN LOCAL PRC-CONTROLLED PAPERS AND HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF NUMEROUS COMMENTARIES OVER THE PAST WEEK.

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PAGE 02 HONG K 11313 191102Z

2. ON SINO-U.S. RELATIONS, THE CHINESE COMPLAINT SEEMS TO BE THAT U.S. PRESS AND OFFICIAL COMMENT AFTER THE SECRETARY'S VISIT GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF PRC FLEXIBILITY OVER TAIWAN; THIS IMPRESSION WAS WRONG AND TENG WAS MERELY TRYING TO CORRECT IT. THE LOCAL PRESS EMPHASIZED REPEATEDLY THAT BILATERAL

TALKS WOULD BE CONTINUING IN THE FUTURE (OFTEN MENTIONING TH UNGA SPECIFICALLY) AND THAT TNEG'S COMMENTS WERE MADE MORE OUT OF REGRET THAT NORMALIZATION SEEMED TO BE SLOWING DOWN THAN OUT OF ANGER.

3. THE PRESS CITED THREE "EXAMPLES" OF U.S. "RETREAT" FROM ITS PREVIOUS POSITION: THE SECRETARY'S SUGGESTION TO ESTABLISH A LIAISON OFFICE IN TAIPEI; HIS MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR SHEN; AND THE VICE-PRESIDENTIAL RATHER THAN PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTION OF VISITING PRC DELEGATIONS (UNLIKE NIXON AND FORD YEARS).

4. THE PRESS IMPLIED THAT TENG'S RATIONALE FOR SPEAKING OUT WAS CHINA'S DISPLEASURE OVER BEING CONSIDERED A PAWN (OR PLAYING CARD) IN THE LARGER GAME OF SOVIET-U.S. DETENTE AND COMPETITION. IT TERMED U.S. CHINA POLICY AS BEING CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH HOW THE SOVIETS WOULD REACT WHILE THE U.S. USED TAIWAN AS A BARGAINING CHIP TO GET CHINA TO COMPROMISE. THE PAPERS REITERATED THAT THE PRC REFUSED TO BE USED BY EITHER OF THE "SUPERPOWERS" AND INSISTED ON MAINTAINING "ITS PRINCIPLED STAND" ON BOTH TAIWAN AND THE SOVIETS. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE COMMENTARIES STRESSED THAT CHINA WAS NOT AFRAID OF THE SOVIETS AND WAS FULLY CONFIDENT IT COULD EVENTUALLY DEFEAT ANY SOVIET LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 HONG K 11313 191102Z

INVASION. THIS IT COULD DO WITHOUT U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE OR NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

5. ON SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS, THE PRESS COMMENTED THAT CHINA SEEKS TO HAVE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH THE SOVIET UNION, AS INDICATED BY CONTINUING TRADE AGREEMENTS AND BORDER TALKS, BUT THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES CAN NEVER HAVE "FRIENDSHIP, MUTUAL AID OR ALLIANCE." NOTING THAT SOME U.S. OBSERVERS QUESTION WHETHER CHINA COULD DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST THE SOVIETS, THE EDITORIALS MERELY REPEATED THAT CHINA WAS DETERMINED TO DO SO INDEPENDENTLY.

6. ON SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS, THE PAPERS SAW CHINA AS BEING MAGNANIMOUS IN GIVING JAPANESE FISHERMEN "FAVORABLE TREATMENT" IN CHINA'S PLANNED FISHING ZONE DESPITE "FUKUDA'S HESITATION IN SIGNING THE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY."  
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Margaret P. Grafeld  
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